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Maryland Is Nation's Most Improved State in 2014 America's Health Rankings

December 10th, 2014

ANNAPOLIS, MD — The UnitedHealth Foundation today released "[America's Health Rankings 2014](#)," which found that Maryland had the greatest improvement of any state this year. Maryland improved eight spots from 24th last year to 16th in 2014. Key areas of improvement cited in the report include increased immunization rates and reductions in rates of preventable hospitalizations, smoking, and binge drinking.

"Over the course of the O'Malley-Brown Administration, we have made better choices to bring low-cost, high quality health coverage to more Marylanders across our State," said **Governor O'Malley**. "Today's news shows a lot of improvement, but our work is far from finished. We are focused on strengthening Maryland's middle class, and helping to lift families out of poverty — continuing to ensure that more Marylanders have access to quality, affordable health coverage is a key ingredient of that effort."

"This jump in national rankings is another sign of significant public health improvement in Maryland," said **Dr. Joshua M. Sharfstein, Secretary of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene**. "It reflects efforts in communities and coalitions across the state to support well-being and prevent disease, as well as our strong clinical care system."

The report, which is in its 25th year of production, also found that Maryland is one of the most improved states for health since 1990. The report noted that in Maryland:

- Since 1990, children in poverty driven down by 7 percent from 16.4 percent to 15.3 percent of children.
- Since 1990, infant mortality driven down by 43 percent from 11.6 to 6.6 deaths per 1,000 live births.
- Since 1990, cardiovascular deaths driven down by 40 percent from 415.8 to 250.7 deaths per 100,000 population.
- Since 1990, violent crime driven down by 38 percent from 768 to 477 offenses per 100,000 population.

As part of the O'Malley-Brown Administration's [16 strategic goals](#) to move Maryland

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forward, the State is working to [reduce preventable hospitalizations by 10 percent by the end of 2015](#) and to [reduce infant mortality in Maryland by 10 percent by 2017](#). To date, Maryland has reduced preventable hospitalizations by 11.5 percent per 100,000 people since 2011, exceeding the state's goal, and has surpassed the goal to decrease Maryland's infant mortality rate by 10 percent by driving it down by 17.5 percent.

In April 2014, the Commonwealth Fund [issued a report](#) highlighting the substantial progress Maryland has made over the last five years. The report noted that Maryland is one of only four states that "stand out for their net improvement across indicators." The State improved in fourteen indicators, while only four indicators deteriorated, making Maryland only one of two states to have a +10 differential. Additionally, Maryland was one of five states that improved on ten or more indicators of health equity, rising from a rank of 30 to a rank of 12.

Additionally, the O'Malley-Brown Administration has embraced [CRISP](#), Maryland's statewide health information exchange (HIE). CRISP's Regional Extension Center for Health IT and HIE efforts serve to advance health and wellness of Marylanders by enabling healthcare providers to share clinical data with other providers and hospital systems across the State. These initiatives, and others, were detailed in an August 2014 report from [Business Insider](#) titled, "An Amazing Healthcare Revolution Is Happening In Maryland — And Almost No One's Talking About It."



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Governor O'Malley and Lt. Governor Brown Announce Maryland Awarded \$15 Million Grant to Expand Access to Pre-K Programs

December 10th, 2014

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Governor O'Malley and Lt. Governor Brown announced today that Maryland has been awarded a \$15 million federal grant to expand access to high quality prekindergarten for four-year olds. As a result, MSDE will continue to increase access to prekindergarten for families who, until now, did not meet income eligibility requirements to enroll in the programs, building on the State's initial expansion this year.

U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan and Health & Human Services Secretary Sylvia M. Burwell announced that 18 states received the awards as part of the new \$226 million [Preschool Development Grants program](#). Depending on available funding, the grant may be renewed for up to four years, for a total of \$60 million.

Secretary Duncan said that increasing access to quality prekindergarten has become a bipartisan cause, and "these states are leading the way."

"We know that education is a ladder to middle class success which is why we've focused on creating opportunity by making [record investments in Maryland's top ranked public schools](#), while expanding the opportunity for a prekindergarten education to more Maryland families," said **Governor O'Malley**. "Today's award builds on the important work that we've started and will help more of our students lead the nation and world in achievement."

"This award from our federal partners builds on our efforts to expand prekindergarten in Maryland and brings us one step closer to making high quality prekindergarten available to all of Maryland's children," said **Lt. Governor Brown**. "By continuing to invest in high-quality prekindergarten programs, we're helping more of our children climb the ladder of opportunity towards success and continuing to close the achievement gap throughout our state."

Thirty-five states and Puerto Rico applied for the grant, one of President Obama's priority initiatives. Maryland applied with 18 other states that had received a Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge grant. Maryland received a \$50 million [Early Learning Challenge grant](#) in December 2011.

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Maryland's Preschool Development Grant application spans four years and builds on the State's [Prekindergarten Expansion Act of 2014](#), which was spearheaded by Lt. Governor Brown, Senate President Miller and House Speaker Busch during this year's legislative session. Under the expansion, the State is partnering with local providers and schools systems across the state to expand high-quality full and half day pre-K to another 1,563 children during the 2014-15 school year. After an application process was conducted by MSDE during the spring, the O'Malley-Brown Administration [announced \\$4.3 million in grants to 24 providers](#) spanning nearly every part of Maryland. The federal grant award announced today will expand access for nearly 3,000 additional students during the 2015-16 school year.

"We are absolutely elated about receiving this award. Expanding access to high-quality preschool is the single most important step we can take to improve the future of our children," said **Dr. Lillian M. Lowery, State Superintendent of Schools**. "The brain research is clear: When very young children are exposed to a variety of learning experiences, their foundations for learning are strengthened and accelerated. Investing in our children's earliest years is critical to closing the opportunity gap for success among all students."

A 2007 study by the Economic Policy Institute found that in Maryland, revenues to the State Treasury would increase more than \$2 for every \$1 spent on early education. The overall return on investment on general economic activity is predicted to be 8.7 times the amount invested. This is due to the fact that investments in early education help children succeed later in life and reduce the likelihood that a child will end up needing government assistance or spending time in a correctional facility ("Enriching Children, Enriching the Nation Maryland Summary," Lynch, Economic Policy Institute, July 2007).

Maryland has been a long-time leader in early childhood development, instituting a prekindergarten assessment more than a decade ago. As one of the O'Malley-Brown Administration's [16 strategic goals](#), the State has set [benchmarks designed to boost the number of children in Maryland who enter kindergarten fully ready to learn](#). Last year, 83 percent of Maryland's kindergarteners entered school fully ready — that is up 38 percent (from 60 percent) since 2005.

A fact sheet on the grant provided by the U.S. Departments of Education and Health & Human Services is attached: [Preschool Development Grants Fact Sheet.pdf](#)



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Nine Maryland Properties to Receive Historic Preservation Tax Credits

December 10th, 2014

ELLICOTT CITY, MD – Today, state officials announced \$10 million in state tax credits that will fund nine historic restoration projects across Maryland. The tax credit will infuse positive change and jobs to communities from Cumberland to Cambridge.

By offsetting the costs of historic renovation, the [Sustainable Communities Tax Credit Program](#) helps owners of historic structures preserve some of Maryland's best places as well as provides an economic boost to their communities. The awards were announced in the Old Post Office in Ellicott City, near the site of a tax credit project.

"This tax credit is one part of our efforts to innovate, educate, and rebuild Maryland by repurposing empty buildings into active, vibrant sites for new businesses," said **Governor O'Malley**. "The Sustainable Communities Tax Credit is one of the most effective investment tools for strengthening our green economy, revitalizing critical historical sites, and creating family-supporting jobs for more Marylanders across our State."

Using figures from the Abell Foundation, [Maryland Historical Trust](#) (MHT) estimates that the program has helped create more than 26,000 jobs through construction and new uses of these structures. In 2015, MHT estimates that the tax credit will create 894 jobs.

The Sustainable Communities Tax Credit program, administered by MHT, part of the [Maryland Department of Planning](#) (MDP), has invested close to \$360 million since it began in 1996. The investments have helped restore more than 3,995 residential and 616 commercial historic structures, preserving buildings with a sense of place that contribute to the uniqueness and charm of Maryland towns and cities.

Part of the 2010 Sustainable Communities Act, the tax credit program promotes community revitalization and strengthens the mutual goals of the Maryland Departments of Planning and [Housing and Community Development](#).

The \$10 million investment will leverage private investment of about \$76.7 million in the following projects:

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1. **Footer's Dye Works, Cumberland:** Conversion of an industrial factory to commercial restaurant and apartment use. Credit amount: \$1,990,552; Est. project cost: \$7,962,208.
2. **Eastern Pumping Station/Baltimore Food Hub, Baltimore:** Conversion of former pumping station to a mixed use food center business incubator. Credit amount: \$3 million; Est. project cost: \$15 million.
3. **Fells Point Recreation Pier, Baltimore:** Conversion of the former municipal pier building for use as a hotel and restaurant facility. Credit amount: \$3 million; Est. project cost: \$39.8 million.
4. **Florence Crittenton Home, Baltimore:** Conversion of former mill owner's mansion/social services campus for use as rental apartments. Credit amount: \$520,000; Est. project cost: \$2.6 million.
5. **Eastwick Motor Company, Baltimore:** Conversion of a 1914 Ford dealership for use as an arts organization center and restaurant. Credit amount: \$453,968; Est. project cost: \$6.1 million.
6. **Carrollton Hall, Ellicott City:** Restoration of the 1832 mansion house for use as community meeting space and museum. Credit amount: \$780,480; Est. project cost: \$3.9 million.
7. **Taylor's Furniture Store, Ellicott City:** Rehabilitation of a retail and residential building for use as restaurant and office space. Credit amount: \$150,000; Est. project cost: \$750,000.
8. **Doughoregan Manor Work House, Ellicott City:** Rehabilitation of a 1760s plantation building for use as rental residential housing. Credit amount: \$60,000; Est. project cost: \$300,000.
9. **511 Poplar Street, Cambridge:** Rehabilitation of commercial building for retail and rental residential use. Credit amount: \$45,000; Est. project cost: \$225,000.



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Governor O'Malley Announces Prince George's County, City of Frostburg Enterprise Zones Expanded, Renewed

December 17th, 2014

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Governor Martin O'Malley announced today that Prince George's County's Enterprise Zone has been expanded and re-designated with some changes to its Focus Areas. In addition, DBED also approved an expansion and re-designation of the City of Frostburg Enterprise Zone. Enterprise Zones enable jurisdictions to provide businesses located within the zones with income tax and property tax credits to help create and retain jobs.

"We are pleased to approve the expansion and renewal of these two zones, which will help sustain existing businesses and attract much-needed new businesses to help us achieve our most important goal of creating and retaining jobs," said **Governor O'Malley**. "Businesses located in the State's 28 Enterprise Zones have contributed to \$2.7 billion in capital investment in Maryland so far in FY 2015."

The Prince George's County Enterprise Zone has been expanded by about 190 acres, and the Focus Areas have been amended and re-designated. The Zone expansion areas include Andrews Federal Campus and Branch Avenue/Woodyard Road. The changes to the Focus Areas include the expansion of the Central Avenue/Addison Road Metro and the inclusion of Glenarden/Landover Mall and Eastover/Southern Avenue. In addition, Martin Luther King Jr. Highway and Capitol Heights is part of the Focus Area re-designation. The Enterprise Zone is a critical component of the county's Transforming Neighborhoods Initiative.

"I want to thank the O'Malley-Brown Administration and the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development for approving our application to re-designate and expand the Prince George's County Enterprise Zone," said **Prince George's County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III**. "The re-designation and expansion of our Enterprise Zone strengthens our ability to attract new businesses and create jobs in areas of the County that offer significant opportunities for transformative economic expansion. Additionally, the expansion of the Focus Areas in the Enterprise Zone includes portions of our Transforming Neighborhoods Initiative communities. This expansion provides a strong boost as we holistically approach improving our most socio-economically challenged neighborhoods through improved public safety, education, quality of life, and, in this case, providing access to quality job opportunities in Prince George's County."

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The City of Frostburg Enterprise Zone, which was set to expire this month, has been expanded by 71 acres and will include the City's downtown area, the Frostburg Industrial Park, Allegany Business Center at Frostburg State University, and commercial areas that connect the downtown area with parks near the interstate exchange. The expanded Zone will help Frostburg with attracting additional businesses, which will increase the number of jobs, reduce poverty rates, and increase the median household income; provide more diversity in employment opportunities; boost new investment in the downtown area and increase the tax base; and spur redevelopment and rehabilitation projects for commercial use.

"The City of Frostburg's Enterprise Zone expansion is very timely for our community. We are pleased that it will now include the Infill Development Zone, which is a new zoning overlay district that incentivizes redevelopment and mixed-use projects," said **Mayor W. Robert Flanigan**. "The Enterprise Zone has helped stimulate economic growth in the City for the past 30 years and we are excited for the opportunities the next decade presents."

DBED approves the State's Enterprise Zones, while local governments are responsible for their administration. Businesses operating within an Enterprise Zone may be eligible for a tax credit towards their state income tax filings based upon the number of new jobs created, and a tax credit on their local real property taxes based upon their overall capital investment into a property.

About DBED:

The Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development stimulates private investment and creates jobs by attracting new businesses, encouraging the expansion and retention of existing companies, and providing workforce training and financial assistance to Maryland companies. The Department promotes the State's many economic advantages and markets local products and services at home and abroad to spur economic development and international investment, trade and tourism. Because they are major economic generators, the Department also supports the Arts, film production, sports and other special events. For more information, visit www.choosemaryland.org.



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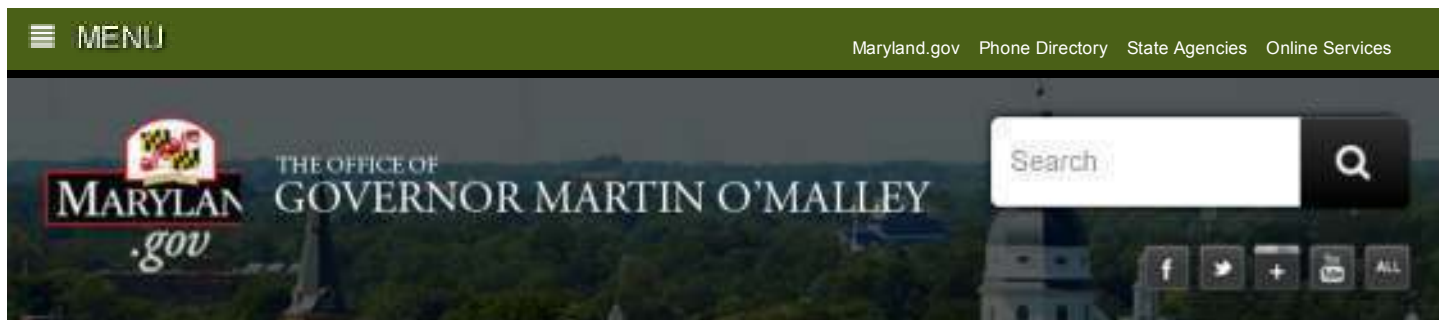
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Governor O'Malley Issues Statement on the Appointment of Abigail Ross Hopper

December 18th, 2014

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Governor Martin O'Malley issued a statement today following the appointment of Abigail Ross Hopper, the Director of the Maryland Energy Administration and his Energy Advisor, as the Director of the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), which manages the development of the nation's conventional and renewable energy and marine mineral resources on the Outer Continental Shelf:

"Abby Hopper will be outstanding as the Director of BOEM. She has been a key member of the team as we've aggressively pursued a more sustainable energy future for Marylanders — including expanding our use of wind energy and other renewable sources. Her hard work has been crucial to helping Marylanders reduce their energy usage, save money on their energy bills, and obtain more of their energy from renewable resources. Her experience and expertise in working with a diverse group of stakeholders will serve BOEM well."



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Governor O'Malley Announces Winner of Maryland's First Hour of Code Contest

December 19th, 2014

MILLERSVILLE, MD – Governor Martin O'Malley today recognized Old Mill Middle School-South in Millersville, MD as the winner of the first "[Maryland Hour of Code](#)" contest. Governor O'Malley was joined by State Superintendent Lillian M. Lowery and Northrop Grumman Electronic Systems President Gloria A. Flach to present a \$10,000 award in education technology to the school for its efforts to provide every child with computer coding experience.

"Ensuring that our students are prepared to compete in the economy of tomorrow is an important part of strengthening STEM education in Maryland," said **Governor O'Malley**. "The Maryland Hour of Code contest is an opportunity for our students to broaden their skills, learn about new, cutting edge technology, and explore opportunities in computer science. Together, we can ensure that every child in our State has the resources they need to compete not just nationally, but globally as well."

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) launched the contest last month in partnership with business partner Northrop Grumman as a way to spark interest in computer coding as part of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) education. The coding contest aimed to provide each student with at least one hour of computer coding experience during Computer Science Education Week (December 8-14).

"A strong STEM educational base is critical to the economy of Maryland and critical to the technology leadership of the United States," said **Ms. Flach**. "That's why Northrop Grumman is pleased to sponsor the first-ever Maryland Hour of Code contest intended to encourage student interest in computer science and related career fields."

This year's inaugural Hour of Code contest was conducted in partnership with the BWI Business Partnership and with the generous sponsorship of the Northrop Grumman Corporation. MSDE worked with [Code.org](#) and national nonprofit Donors Choose to organize the contest with the goal of exposing students statewide to computer science and coding. Code.org offers its own annual [Hour of Code](#) contest, which awards \$10,000 in classroom technology to one school in each state. Earlier

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this month, Code.org awarded its prize to Friendship Academy of Engineering and Technology in Baltimore City.

"We cannot thank our business partners enough for supporting our students and ensuring they are exposed to in-demand career skills," said **Dr. Lowery**. "Old Mill students learned that computer coding can lead to many exciting careers and can be used to apply math and science in interesting and meaningful ways."

The Maryland Hour of Code contest challenged public school teachers to develop computer coding activities and implementation plans for students of all abilities. More than 100 Maryland elementary and secondary schools applied for the \$10,000 award, which was awarded in the form of [DonorsChoose.org](https://donorschoose.org) funding credits.

Currently, 4,000 of Maryland's 870,000 public school students are enrolled in computer science and programming-related courses in career and technical education programs at 39 high schools in Maryland. Another 1,200 students have enrolled in Advanced Placement computer science courses offered at 117 schools. Maryland had the most African American students take the AP Computer Science exam in 2013. Additionally, Maryland ranks among the top eight states for the number of Hispanic students who took the AP Computer Science exam in 2013.

As part of our [16 strategic goals](#), the O'Malley-Brown Administration has set benchmarks designed to [boost the number of STEM college and graduate degrees awarded in Maryland](#). As of the 2012-2013 school year, 13,082 STEM degrees were awarded in Maryland — that is up 37.1 percent (from 9,544 degrees) since the 2005-2006 school year.



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More Than 136,000 Marylanders Have Enrolled for Jan. 1 Coverage in State's Health Insurance Marketplace

December 19th, 2014

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Governor O'Malley announced today that [Maryland Health Connection](#), the state-based health insurance marketplace for individuals, families and small businesses, enrolled 136,685 individuals from the start of open enrollment on Nov. 15 to last night's deadline for coverage that begins Jan. 1.

That total includes 79,987 people signed up for private Qualified Health Plans (QHPs). More than three-quarters of QHP enrollees, or 61,448, are eligible for an Advanced Premium Tax Credit (APTC) — upfront financial assistance to reduce their monthly insurance premiums. An additional 56,698 have enrolled in Medicaid since Nov. 15 through Maryland Health Connection. Open enrollment continues through Feb. 15, 2015.

"Today more Marylanders have affordable, comprehensive health coverage through Maryland Health Connection thanks to the hard work of our team, led by Dr. Sharfstein, Isabel FitzGerald and Carolyn Quattrochi," said **Governor O'Malley**. "I also commend the hundreds of partners, navigators, brokers and carriers who are working to make our system successful and ultimately keep more Marylanders healthy."

"The success of Maryland's second open enrollment period thus far is a testament to the hard work of the leadership and employees at the exchange and our partners," said **Lt. Governor Brown**. "With the newly upgraded website and more local outreach events, more than 136,000 residents were able to successfully and easily sign up for quality, affordable health coverage in a little over one month."

The total QHP enrollments during the first 34 days of this 90-day state insurance marketplace nearly matches the total 81,091 QHP enrollments during the first year of the marketplace, which had a six-month enrollment period. Yesterday alone, 12,623 Marylanders enrolled; it took about six weeks to reach that mark a year ago. Nearly one-third of enrollees this year are between 18 and 34 years old.

This week, the National Center for Health Statistics, based in Montgomery County, released new data on health insurance coverage during the second quarter of 2014 — the first federal survey data to largely capture the effects of the Affordable Care

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Act's first open enrollment period. The new data echoes earlier findings about dramatic reductions in the share of Americans without health insurance. Estimates from the Council of Economic Advisers (CEA) show that this year's drop in the nation's uninsured rate is the largest over any period since the early 1970s. The uninsured rate is now at or near the lowest level recorded across five decades of data.

"This is a great day for public health in Maryland," said **Joshua M. Sharfstein, Secretary of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange (MHBE)**, which administers the state's health insurance marketplace. "I'm grateful to all the people whose hard work has led to this success."

A team led by Isabel FitzGerald, Secretary of the Department of Information Technology, rebuilt the website following the first year with technology from the exchange in Connecticut. Extensive testing followed. The addition of "anonymous browsing," which allows consumers to compare insurance plans and costs without first creating an account, was well received.

Four times as many enrollment fairs as a year ago were offered to provide greater in-person assistance and more local outreach. At least 10 more HealthConnectNow! enrollment fairs will be held around the state in January and February. See MarylandHealthConnection.gov for details.

Marylanders who still need quality, affordable health coverage can enroll until Feb. 15. If they qualify, they can still get tax credits upfront to lower their monthly insurance bills if they enroll between now and Jan. 18 for coverage that begins Feb. 1. If they enroll between Jan. 19 and Feb. 15, coverage begins March 1.

"The turnout so far affirms the need for affordable health coverage in the community, and we're extremely pleased that Maryland Health Connection and its partners have been helping to meet that demand. We encourage everyone who needs coverage to take a look at the many plans being offered by Feb. 15," said **MHBE Executive Director Carolyn A. Quattrocki**.

About Maryland Health Benefit Exchange: The Maryland Health Benefit Exchange (MHBE) is a public corporation and independent unit of the State government established in April 2011 in accordance with the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (ACA). It is responsible for the administration of Maryland Health Connection. www.MarylandHBE.com.

About Maryland Health Connection: Maryland Health Connection (MHC) is the state-based health insurance marketplace for individuals and families to compare and enroll in health insurance, as well as determine eligibility for Medicaid and other assistance programs, federal tax credits and cost-sharing reductions. www.MarylandHealthConnection.gov



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Governor O'Malley Issues Statement on Legislation Signed Honoring Harriet Tubman

December 19th, 2014

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Governor Martin O'Malley today issued a statement on the signing of legislation by President Barack Obama that honors the contributions and preserves the legacy of Harriet Tubman. A Maryland native and one of the Underground Railroad's most famous conductors, Harriet Tubman made historic advancements in human rights:

"We are grateful for the bipartisan support for legislation that authorizes both the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park in Maryland and the Harriet Tubman National Historical Park in New York. Maryland is woven into Tubman's life tapestry. She was born on the Eastern Shore and this project will provide a window into what it was like when she was here. She used these waterways. She walked these fields and these woods.

"It has been our goal, along with our counterparts in New York, to ensure that the life and legacy of Harriet Tubman are honored in both states. Collectively, the parks reflect her true and complete journey from enslaved to free and from freedom seeker to humanitarian."

Under the O'Malley-Brown Administration, Maryland showed its support for the project by establishing the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway driving tour on the Eastern Shore. The Administration secured more than \$20 million in state and federal funds for the construction of the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad State Park and Visitor Center, which is currently under construction in Dorchester County and slated to open in 2016.



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Governor O'Malley Appoints Judges in Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Howard, Montgomery, and Prince George's Counties

December 30th, 2014

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Governor O'Malley announced today the appointments of ten judges to the Maryland Circuit and District Courts. These appointees bring a diverse array of legal experiences to their new positions. They also represent the ethnic and gender diversity of our great state.

The newly appointed judges were recommended to Governor O'Malley by local trial court judicial nominating commissions.

"I am honored to appoint such an accomplished and diverse group of candidates to the Maryland Circuit and District Courts," said **Governor O'Malley**. "These appointees will bring to the bench a true commitment to public service and a wide range of legal expertise."

Governor O'Malley made two appointments to the **Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County**.

Glenn Louis Klavans has maintained a solo practice in Glen Burnie for the last fifteen years, specializing in trial work in the Circuit and District Courts. Previously, Mr. Klavans practiced at two other private firms, where he represented a range of clients in civil and criminal litigation matters. Prior to his work in private practice, Mr. Klavans served for ten years as an Assistant State's Attorney for Baltimore City, prosecuting sexual offenses, domestic violence, and narcotics crimes. Mr. Klavans earned his law degree from the University of Baltimore School of Law and his undergraduate degree from Drew University.

Delegate Cathleen Marie Vitale has practiced in Anne Arundel County for the entirety of her twenty-five year career. Ms. Vitale began her legal career as a law clerk to the Honorable Raymond G. Thieme, Jr. and then practiced with two Anne Arundel County law firms, representing clients in civil and criminal matters in District and Circuit Courts. She currently maintains a solo practice in Glen Burnie, specializing in civil trial practice, family law matters, and mediation. Since 2010, Ms. Vitale has served as the elected representative of Anne Arundel County, District 33 in the Maryland House of Delegates. Previously, Ms. Vitale served for eleven years

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as Councilwoman on the Anne Arundel County Council. Ms. Vitale earned her law degree from the University of Baltimore School of Law and a bachelor of arts from the University of Maryland, College Park.

For the **Circuit Court for Howard County**, Governor O'Malley has appointed **Master Mary Morton Kramer**. Since 2004, Master Kramer has served as a Master in Chancery for the Circuit Court for Howard County, hearing family law, child in need of assistance (CINA), and juvenile delinquency cases. Previously, she maintained a general trial practice for nearly twenty years at private firms in Howard and Baltimore Counties. In 2012, Master Kramer was appointed to the Judicial Ethics Committee by Maryland Chief Judge Robert M. Bell. She earned her law degree from the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law and her undergraduate degree from West Virginia University.

Governor O'Malley made two appointments to the **Circuit Court for Montgomery County**.

Judge Karla Natasha Smith has served on the District Court for Montgomery County since 2012. Prior to her appointment to the District Court bench, Judge Smith served as an Assistant State's Attorney for sixteen years, including for five years as Chief of the Family Violence Division in the Montgomery County State's Attorney's Office. Judge Smith has a long history of service to the most vulnerable citizens of Maryland, having served previously on the Governor's Family Violence Council and as Co-Chair of the Montgomery County Taskforce on Elder and Vulnerable Adult Abuse, and currently as the Chair of the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council. Judge Smith earned her law degree from the University of Virginia School of Law and her undergraduate degree from the University of Maryland, College Park.

John Michael Maloney is the Deputy State's Attorney for Montgomery County, where he has served for the past seven years. Previously, Mr. Maloney served for eighteen years as an Assistant State's Attorney for Prince George's County, including for four years as Chief of the Homicide Unit. Mr. Maloney is a former member of the Montgomery County Juvenile Justice Commission and is currently the Chair of the State Prosecutor Selections and Disability Commission. Mr. Maloney earned his law degree from the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law and his undergraduate degree from Colgate University.

For the **District Court for Anne Arundel County**, Governor O'Malley has appointed **Laura Marie Robinson**. Since 2001, Ms. Robinson has practiced at the Glen Burnie firm Lessans, Praley & McCormick, P.A., representing clients in civil and criminal matters in Maryland District and Circuit Courts, as well as the United States District Court for the District of Maryland. Previously, Ms. Robinson served as an Assistant State's Attorney for Anne Arundel County. She currently serves on the Board of Trustees for Maryland's Office of the Public Defender. Ms. Robinson earned her law degree from the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law and her undergraduate degree from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County.

For the **District Court for Baltimore County**, Governor O'Malley has appointed **Kevin Yvonne Thomas Wiggins**. Mr. Wiggins has served for fourteen years as an Assistant State's Attorney for Baltimore City. During his tenure, he has served in

the Juvenile, Misdemeanor, General Trial, Economic Crimes, and Homicide Divisions of the Baltimore City State's Attorney's Office. He is currently the Division Chief of Criminal Prosecution, Zone 3. Mr. Wiggins earned his law degree from the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law and his undergraduate degree from Towson University.

Governor O'Malley made two appointments to the **District Court for Montgomery County**.

Hon. Zuberi Bakari Williams currently serves as an Administrative Law Judge, presiding over administrative cases at over 30 state agencies. Previously, he worked as a trial attorney in Washington, D.C.'s Office of the Attorney General and an associate at two prominent law firms. Earlier in his legal career, Judge Williams served as a law clerk to Judge Gerald Bruce Lee of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia and Maryland Chief Judge Robert M. Bell. He received law and graduate degrees from American University and an undergraduate degree from Texas Christian University.

Holly David Reed, III has been a solo practitioner in Silver Spring since 1999, focusing on civil litigation, criminal defense, family law, and domestic violence matters. During that time, he served as a panel attorney for the Maryland Office of the Public Defender, Washington D.C.'s Court of Appeals, and the U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland. Previously, Mr. Reed owned a telecommunications company and worked for a large telecommunications company. He began his career serving as a law clerk for Judge Iraline Barnes in Washington D.C.'s Superior Court. Mr. Reed received a law degree from Howard University School of Law and an undergraduate degree from the University of Maryland, College Park.

For the **District Court for Prince George's County**, Governor O'Malley has appointed **Katina Self Steuart**. For the past eight years, Ms. Steuart has been an Assistant State's Attorney for Prince George's County, prosecuting major felony offenses and violent crimes. Earlier in her career, Ms. Steuart prosecuted felony and misdemeanor domestic violence offenses and juvenile offenses for the Prince George's County State's Attorney's Office and practiced as a civil litigation associate at a private firm in Prince George's County. Ms. Steuart received her law degree from the Catholic University of America, Columbus School of Law and her undergraduate degree from Towson University.



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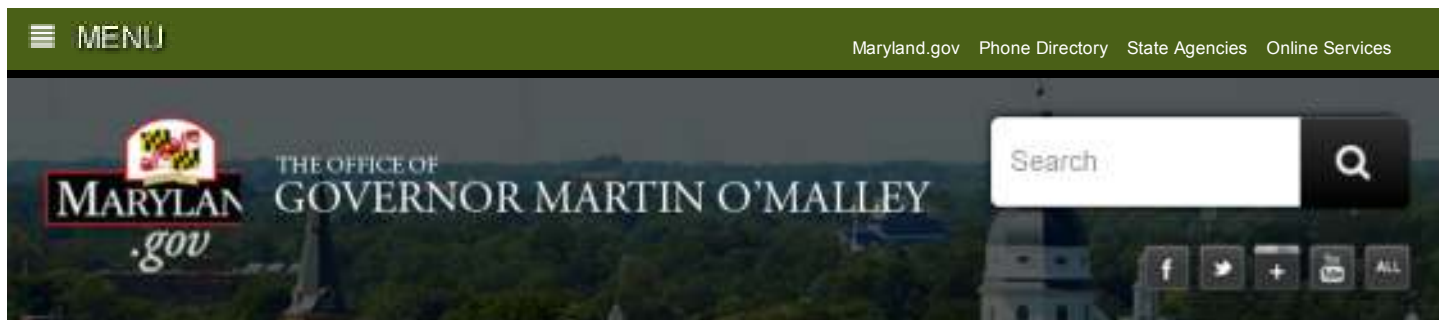
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Governor O'Malley Issues Statement on the Four Remaining Inmates Sentenced to Death in Maryland

December 31st, 2014

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Governor O'Malley today issued the following statement on the sentences of the four remaining inmates sentenced to death in Maryland:

"In a representative government, state executions make every citizen a party to a legalized killing as punishment.

"Two years ago, after much debate and consideration, the Maryland General Assembly abolished the death penalty in our State replacing the sentence with life without the possibility of parole.

"The General Assembly's abolition of the death penalty was not challenged in referendum.

"There are four inmates who currently sit on Maryland's death row.

"Recent appeals and the latest opinion on this matter by Maryland's Attorney General have called into question the legality of carrying out earlier death sentences — sentences imposed prior to abolition. In fact, the Attorney General has opined that the carrying out of prior sentences is now illegal in the absence of an existing statute.

"I have now met or spoken with many of the survivors of the victims of these brutal murders.

"They are all good and decent people who have generously granted me the courtesy of discussing the cases of their individual family members. I am deeply grateful and appreciative of their willingness to speak with me.

"They have borne their grief bravely along with the additional torment of an un-ending legal process. If endless death penalty appeals were to continue, these family members would, no doubt, persevere through that process with continued courage and fortitude. Of this I have no doubt.

"The question at hand is whether any public good is served by allowing these essentially un-executable sentences to stand.

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"In my judgment, leaving these death sentences in place does not serve the public good of the people of Maryland — present or future.

"Gubernatorial inaction — at this point in the legal process — would, in my judgment, needlessly and callously subject survivors, and the people of Maryland, to the ordeal of an endless appeals process, with unpredictable twists and turns, and without any hope of finality or closure.

"In the final analysis, there is one truth that stands between and before all of us. That truth is this — few of us would ever wish for our children or grandchildren to kill another human being or to take part in the killing of another human being. The legislature has expressed this truth by abolishing the death penalty in Maryland.

"For these reasons, I intend to commute Maryland's four remaining death sentences to life without the possibility of parole.

"It is my hope that these commutations might bring about a greater degree of closure for all of the survivors and their families."



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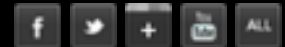
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